



EXHIBIT 14  
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**HB 493**

**Sponsored By: James Knox  
House Judiciary Committee**

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

This bill would create two different birth certificates, to be issued depending on one's family lineage. It creates the impression that some citizens are less deserving of rights and privileges than others. The 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution clearly controls both state and federal citizenship laws, and Montana state legislators have no power or authority to change our country's constitution. The interpretation of the 14th Amendment included in this bill is invented out of whole cloth. Long ago, the U.S. Supreme Court held that anyone born in the U.S. is a citizen, regardless of their lineage.

In order to create some distinction between citizens, one would have to amend the U.S. Constitution. Obviously, this committee doesn't have the authority to do that. If the committee passes this bill, and the rest of the legislature shares in its delusion and enacts this law, lawsuits will be immediately filed. The law will be enjoined and then invalidated. Supporters of this bill will have accomplished nothing, because this bill attempts to do what the state simply cannot.

What this committee is deciding is not implementation of this law, which is impossible, but whether it wants to take our state down a path that generations of Montanans will look back on with shame.

What this bill would attempt to do is make people like me "second class" citizens. Both of my parents are from Pakistan. They grew up in a small village in the mountains of northern Pakistan. The village had extremely limited resources and only the best and brightest students were able to study past high school. My Dad was one of only a few students from his village who was able to graduate and attend college. He studied medicine and became a doctor. In 1974, he got a visa to enter the United States to practice medicine in an underserved community that had a serious need for doctors.

A few years later, I was born. I acquired citizenship at birth, and became a U.S. citizen before both of my parents. However, they both naturalized a few years later. If this bill had applied to me, I would have to get a different birth certificate just because my parents were Pakistani citizens at that time, and under Pakistani law I would have been considered a Pakistani citizen. That could have made me a "foreign national" as far as this bill was concerned.

Thankfully, the law doesn't work this way and there are no "second class" citizens. Everyone born in the U.S. is a citizen, and that includes the children of immigrants. I just had my first son two months ago. As a new father, and in my line of work as an immigration

attorney, I can't tell you how often I am thankful that my parents came to the U.S. and that I was born here. I value my citizenship dearly, and it is one of the most important rights that one has.

This is the second bill introduced by Rep. James Knox based on his misunderstanding of the 14th Amendment. During the first hearing, Mr. Knox repeatedly referred to me as being "from Pakistan" despite my testimony that I was born in the United States. He also stated that my citizenship was granted based on a "misinterpretation" of the law.

This committee should ask themselves if they think Montanans will take kindly to having their lineage examined in this way to determine if they are "first class" or "second class" citizens. I know that I am offended by the implication that I am not a true citizen of this country, and other Montanans will share this outrage.

This bill is flagrantly unconstitutional. Please do not pass HB 493.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Shahid Haque-Hausrath', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

By \_\_\_\_\_

Shahid Haque-Hausrath